



Office of
the Schools
Adjudicator

**Template for
Local Authority Report**

to

The Schools Adjudicator

from

Lincolnshire Local Authority

to be provided by

31 October 2022

Report Cleared by: Name Martin Smith

Job Title Assistant Director of Education

Telephone number 01522 553304

Email: martin.smith@lincolnshire.gov.uk

Date submitted: 20/10/2022

By: Name Emily Nicholls

Job Title School Admissions Manager

Telephone number 01522 553304

Email: emily.nicholls@lincolnshire.gov.uk

Website: [Office of the Schools Adjudicator](#)

**Please email your completed report to: [Office of the Schools Adjudicator](#) by
31 October 2022 and earlier if possible**

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Introduction

1. Section 88P of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (the Act) requires every local authority to make an annual report to the adjudicator. The Chief Adjudicator then includes a summary of these reports in her annual report to the Secretary for State for Education. The School Admissions Code (the Code) sets out the requirements for reports by local authorities in paragraph 6. Paragraph 3.30 specifies what must be included as a minimum in the report to the adjudicator and makes provision for the local authority to include any other matters. Paragraphs 6 and 3.30 of the Code require that each local authority publish its report locally. Local authorities do not have to include this introduction and guidance in their locally published report.
2. In 2020 and 2021, we asked far fewer questions than in previous years, asking only for the minimum information required by the Code. This was in response to the pressures on local authorities and others in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic. This year, we have again sought to keep the information requested to the minimum. We have, at the request of the Department for Education, asked a small number of additional questions relating to the impact of the new Code which came into force on 1 September 2021.
3. The new Code also changes the period to be covered by reports to the adjudicator and the deadline for submitting reports to the adjudicator. **This year's report must cover the 2021/2022 academic year and be submitted to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator by 31 October 2022.**

Guidance on completing the template

4. In a departure from previous practice, we have included all the guidance on completing specific parts of the template in this section. We hope that this will be helpful. This is in response to feedback that including guidance and definitions in the body of the template could make the report harder for readers to follow and less accessible. There is no requirement for local authorities to include the introduction and the guidance in their published reports, but they are free to do so if they wish.
5. We should be grateful if in completing questions which ask for information about primary and secondary schools and/or pupils, local authorities would follow the approach to classification of schools used in statutory provisions and in the Department for Education Statistical First Release¹ and the Education Middle School (England) Regulations 2002².
6. Guidance on specific questions and/or meaning of specific terms in this report:
 - a. "in-year admissions": This means admission at the start of any school year to a year group which is not a normal point of entry for the school concerned (for example at the beginning of Year 2 for a five to eleven

¹ [Department for Education Statistical First Release](#)

² [The Education Middle School \(England\) Regulations 2002](#)

primary school) **and** admission during the course of any school year after the end of the statutory waiting list period (31 December) in normal years of admission.

b. Not applicable means at questions:

Section 1: B.i. - B.iv. that there were no children falling within the relevant definition.

Section 1: B.v. that there were no schools for which the local authority was the admission authority at 1 September 2021.

Section 1: B.vi. that there were no schools in the local authority's area for which the local authority was not the admission authority at 1 September 2021.

Section 2: B.i. - B.iv. that there were no children falling within the relevant definition.

Section 2: C.i. that there were no children falling within the definition.

Section 2: D.iv. that there were no hard to place children referred to the protocol.

7. We welcome all comments that local authorities make in the comment boxes and we aim to reflect those comments in the Annual Report, but we ask for the comments to be entered under the right headings. Section 3 invites comment on any other matters not specifically addressed in this template if local authorities wish to do so. The views expressed in previous years also remain a matter of public record.
8. We ask that where possible, you return the template in Word instead of PDF formatting. A number of you have commented on the formatting of the template and we have tried to make it as accessible as possible, but we are aware that some local authorities use different versions of Word.

Information requested

Section 1 - Normal point of admission

A. Co-ordination

i. How well did co-ordination of the main admissions round work?	Not well	A large number of small problems or a major problem	Well with few small problems	Very well
Reception				Yes
Year 7				Yes
Other relevant years of entry				Yes

ii. Please give examples to illustrate your answer if you wish:

B. Looked after and previously looked after children

i. How does the admissions system in your local authority area serve the interests of looked after children at **normal points of admission**?

Not at all Not well Well Very well Not applicable

ii. How do the admissions systems in other local authority areas serve the interests of children looked after by your local authority at **normal points of admission**?

Not at all Not well Well Very well Not applicable

iii. How does your admissions system serve the interests of children who are looked after by other local authorities but educated in your area at **normal points of admission**?

Not at all Not well Well Very well Not applicable

- iv. How does the admissions system in your local authority area serve the interests of previously looked after children at **normal points of admission**?

Not at all Not well Well Very well Not applicable

- v. Please confirm that your local authority has included children adopted from state care outside England in its definition of previously looked after children in admission arrangements for schools for which it is the admission authority

Yes No Not applicable

- vi. How confident are you that all other admission authorities in your area have included children adopted from state care outside England in their definitions of previously looked after children in admission arrangements for schools for which they are the admission authority?

Confident all have Confident some have Not aware of whether all or some have Not applicable

vii If you wish, please give examples of any good or poor practice or difficulties which exemplify your answers about the admission to schools of looked after and previously looked after children at **normal points of admission**:

C. Special educational needs and/or disabilities

Please provide any comments you wish to make on the admission of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities at normal points of admission:

The conflicting deadlines to finalise EHCP's and send offers to other LA's for secondary transfer continue to be a source of friction between the LA and secondary schools as it is not always possible to include SEND children within a PAN for national offer day. We would welcome a change to this legislation to make these two deadlines more compatible in the interests of ensuring that schools are in the best position possible to meet the needs of these pupils.

Section 2 - In-year admissions

A. Effect of Code changes on in-year admissions

Please provide any comments you wish to make on the effect of the changes to the Code's provisions for in-year admissions. It would be particularly helpful to have comments on whether you think the changes have made it easier or not for parents to secure places for children in-year?

The 15-day deadline to process mid-year application has provided a springboard for conversations with schools and to hold schools to account however it would be helpful if this deadline were shorter for those not referring through the protocol as some schools take the full 15 days to decide whether they have a space, which makes the process of finding an alternative school much longer than 15 days in some circumstances.

FAP reforms have provided a structured process and this clarity has been welcomed by the majority of schools. Schools have engaged well with the process of FAP over the past year.

We believe there is a negative impact of the code allowing schools to refuse admission after the intake year wherever the admission of an additional child would cause prejudice. This creates difficulty in accessing places which exist on the SCAP return and results in an over-reliance on FAP to place children at the detriment of other schools, particularly in the secondary sector. A model encompassing 'operational capacity' of schools would be favoured for transparency.

B. Looked after children and previously looked after children

- i. How does the **in-year admission** system serve children who are looked after by your local authority and who are being educated in your area?

Not at all Not well Well Very well Not applicable

- ii. How do the **in-year admission** systems in other local authority areas serve the interests of your looked after children?

Not at all Not well Well Very well Not applicable

- iii. How does your **in-year admission** system serve the interests of children who are looked after by other local authorities but educated in your area?

Not at all Not well Well Very well Not applicable

iv. How does your **in-year admission** system serve the interests of previously looked after children?

Not at all Not well Well Very well Not applicable

v. If you wish, please give examples of any good or poor practice or difficulties which support or exemplify your answers about **in-year admissions** for looked after and previously looked after children:

LAC children moving into Lincolnshire continue to face barriers to accessing a school place quickly where the DfE guidance has not been followed by the social worker / virtual head prior to making an application. There have been instances where challenge to schools from virtual heads of other LA's has been misplaced or incorrect.

Where a school does refuse admission, other LA's often do not attempt to secure an alternative placement, instead expecting the LA admissions team to complete this task, however this is inappropriate as we are unaware of the needs of the child, provision put in place nor appropriate provision. More detailed guidance would be welcomed alongside a reminder to LA's on the importance of meeting with schools to discuss the needs of the child and the circumstances of the cohort at the school prior to making an application and following up promptly in the event of a refusal.

C. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities

i. How well served are children with special educational needs and/or disabilities who have an education, health and care plan that names a school when they need to be **admitted in-year**?

Not at all well Not well Well Very well Not applicable

ii. How well served are children with special educational needs and/or disabilities who do not have an education, health and care plan when they need to be **admitted in-year**?

Not at all well Not well Well Very well Do not know

iii. Please give examples of any good or poor practice or difficulties which support or exemplify your answers about **in-year admissions** for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities:

iv. If you wish, please provide any comments about **in-year admissions** in respect of other children:

The co-ordination of children through the various refugee schemes has worked well over the past year, making use of the Fair Access Protocol where appropriate.

D. Fair access protocol

i. Do you have a fair access protocol agreed with the majority of state-funded mainstream schools in your area?

Yes for primary

Yes for secondary

ii. If you have not been able to tick both boxes above, please explain why:

iii. How many children were admitted to schools in your area under the fair access protocol between 1 August 2021 and 31 July 2022?

Type of school	Number of Primary aged children admitted	Number of Secondary aged children admitted
Community and voluntary controlled	28	0
Foundation, voluntary aided and academies	73	192
Total	101	192

iv. How well do you consider hard to place children are served by the fair access protocol in your area?

Not at all well applicable

Not well

Well

Very well

Not applicable

v. Please provide any comments you wish on the protocol not covered above. It would be particularly helpful to have any comments on the impact of the Code changes on the operation of the FAP in your area and the ability to secure places for vulnerable children:

The Fair Access Protocol was reviewed in line with the new code for September 2021 and further reviewed in September 2022. The protocol in Lincolnshire has worked well to place children in an equitable manner, whilst ensuring that the administrative burden for school is minimised. There have been no instances where we have needed to seek a direction for a child, and schools have responded within the statutory 7 calendar days in the vast majority of cases. Where there has been no response from a school, this has been rectified shortly after in all cases. No cases exceeded the timescale to be placed via FAP in the last academic year.

The code change which allowed schools to refuse on the grounds of behaviour has worked well, however we would welcome further clarification on schools' duties to respond to requests for information as this has been reported as a stumbling block for schools when attempting to refuse in this way.

No secondary LA maintained schools were approached under FAP as both schools for which the LA are the admissions authority are Grammar schools. There were no qualifying applicants who required placement via this method.

E. Directions

How many directions did the local authority make between 1 August 2021 and 31 July 2022 to maintained schools for which the local authority is not the admission authority to admit children (including children looked after by the local authority but resident in another area)?

Total Number of children	Of which, looked after	Of which, not looked after
0	0	0

F. If you wish, please provide any other comments on the admission of children **in-year** not previously raised:

Section 3 - Other matters

Are there any other matters that the local authority would like to raise that have not been covered by the questions above?

Section 4 - Feedback

We would be grateful if you could provide any feedback on completing this report to inform our practice for 2023.

The collection occurring in October rather than in the summer term results in a full set of data and more accurate picture of the success/concerns in the last admissions round.

Thank you for completing this template.

Please return to [Office of the Schools Adjudicator](#) by 31October 2022